

Pierce County Industrial Development Committee—MINUTES *September 11, 2012*

County Board Room, Pierce County Courthouse, 414 West Main Street, Ellsworth, Wisconsin

Members present: Jim Ross, Michael Kahlow, Dean Bergseng. **Staff present:** Bill Warner, Heather Hines. **Guests present:** Greg Flogstad - Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission; John Norquist - Pierce County Historical Association; Larry Dokkestul, Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services; JoAnn Miller, Administrative Coordinator. Highway Commissioner Chad Johnson joined the meeting in progress.

Chair Ross called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. Agenda approved as presented (*Kahlow, Bergseng*).

August 15, 2012 minutes approved as presented (*Kahlow, Bergseng*). Public Comment: None.

2013 County budget guidelines for agencies under Committee Jurisdiction:

- a. *Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission:* Flogstad noted that the total amount they are requesting from member counties is the same as 2012 but that Pierce County's allocation will be less next year. The Commission understands the county's budget constraints. Flogstad discussed RPC help with grant preparation and implementation for activities such as Safe Routes to Schools for Spring Valley, planning assistance for emergency management coordination, human services transportation plan, and economic development. MRRPC also has managed administration for the Bergquist CDBG loan through the State. *Motion by Kahlow to recommend the MRRPC budget at the requested level of \$18,112.00 for 2013; second by Bergseng and agreed to.*
- b. *Pierce County Historical Association:* Norquist discussed raising the PCHA budget \$6,000 from 2012. The reason they are asking for a higher amount is for the following reasons. The budget is stretched further than before due to the new site across the street from the Courthouse. The costs are involved with moving into that facility. Currently the Lawrence site & to maintain that building it costs \$1,853. PCHA also has a storage shed in Hager City that costs \$800/year. It is an insulated garage & needs a certain physical condition to save Pierce County artifacts. Many volunteer hours have been involved in changing the new facility. The cost to run it, including utilities should be \$3,670 and the building insurance is \$3,000. There is no handicap access currently, and PCHA is looking to change that in the future. There is also no bathroom facility, except now for staff. There has been a great amount of sweat equity involved. PCHA needs funding to maintain & for basic costs. The Association does fundraise with various measures, including a quilt raffle, the 100 mile garage sale, as well as showcasing at the Pierce County Fair. PCHA is looking for grants that would help them with building improvements. Kahlow mentioned highway cuts & the lower budget & how certain things like immunization for children & elders being of higher importance. He salutes Norquist, but cannot see funding PCHA when there are other cuts that currently exist. *Motion by Bergseng to recommend the PCHA budget of \$12,000 for 2013; second by Kahlow; motion agreed to, Kahlow opposed.*

Proposed sale of surplus Highway Department property, 15 acres +/- of Stogdill pit, SW 1/4 of Section 34, town of Trenton. *Motion was made by Kahlow to consider agenda item 9 now; second by Bergseng and agreed to.* Warner noted that the Highway Committee suggested that the Industrial Development Committee look at this item prior to Highway's final action. Commissioner Johnson showed photos of the area being considered and noted that Highway has a party interested in this mined out part of the Stogdill pit. Kahlow inquired about the reason for asking Industrial Development's opinion, Warner noting that this Committee has contemplated potential industrial use of this property for industrial purposes since the late 1980's, with a planning study done in 2000 and a topographic survey plus Phase I environmental assessment done in 2009. The east 25 acres was declared surplus in the 1990's and 3 acres were sold to Dairyland Power for an electrical substation several years ago. The Highway Committee is now looking at the northwest corner of the pit. It is not contemplated for future material use. Warner said the most recent prospect was in 2006, an ethanol plant that did not proceed, and there has been limited interest in these properties in recent years. Discussion of adjacent property uses and the possible enhancement of the Highway property along 830th Street if rail service was extended to the County land. Discussion of the need for a formal motion. *Committee consensus was that no formal action by the Industrial Development Committee was needed and that the Committee had no objection relative to the proposed surplus property sale.*

Resumed: 2013 County budget guidelines for agencies under Committee Jurisdiction:

- c. *Pierce County Economic Development Corporation:* Ross noted that the Committee no longer funds Travel Pierce County. Warner referred to the budget request memo and example materials, and handed out the 2012 version of the county economic development budget survey from the La Crosse Area Development Corporation. Ross said that looking at development in surrounding counties and that Pierce County is lagging. Residents are concerned with taxes and with government tightening its belt, and if we can find ways to grow our economic development it will eventually create a larger tax base but it takes time. It is a delicate balance. Ross noted that a 4-lane corridor from River Falls to Ellsworth would generate more economic development. The amount provided by Pierce County in 2012 was \$44,000. Kahlow asked that whether increased private funding was possible if the county increased its budget, through challenge grants or other requirements (yes). Kahlow said it is harder to justify without business contribution. Ross said as a business owner, a corporation wants to know what specific value PCEDC will be to a business. Warner suggested that more communications & marketing materials plus organizing & survey work for the broadband access improvement project were priorities. Dokkestul mentioned that when PCEDC was looking at this budgets over this past year, there were three areas that were consistent priorities -- salary level for professional director & support staff; marketing and promotional activities; and special projects such as the broadband improvement initiative. Dokkestul said that the budget for PCEDC should be about \$130,000 for the corporation to really be strong and get things accomplished. Warner said he will fundraise with existing businesses. Kahlow asked Warner if he proposed an increase of \$19,800, if it could be understood that the EDC would need to raise additional funding from the private sector (yes). *Motion by Kahlow to recommend a contribution to PCEDC budget of \$63,800 with the understanding that the EDC will be expected to generate an additional \$13,500 in private funding; second by Bergseng and agreed to.*

County Revolving Loan Fund status and WEDC regionalization initiative. Warner referenced the RLF portfolio, with no current issues. The RLF did meet and approved a motion recommending that Pierce County ask to join the Regional Business Fund, Inc. [existing regional revolving loan fund established in 2006] so that when/if the State requires regionalization, Pierce County has already set a direction. Flogstad mentioned the MRRPC Administration manual under development and to be discussed at the next regional planning meeting. Miller asked Flogstad what they've heard from Vernon County (nothing at this time).

County broadband service and improvement strategies. Warner distributed a sample broadband survey format put out by Link Wisconsin that he found to be ineffective & not generating the proper results relative to current service providers and use, service levels, or price sensitivity. We need to define the service we have, the service we desire, and have a plan to discuss with a potential provider. It is a tough region to serve with the landscape. We need to consult with local telecommunication providers and survey who really needs the service. Some local firms and residents are not satisfied with their current providers. Flogstad asked about our contact with CenturyLink and suggested Dan Braund from the La Crosse office could help the effort, Warner asked Flogstad to provide Dan's contact information.

Committee and County expectations and priorities relative to economic development strategy; program & service delivery; industry & cluster opportunities; regional, state, & federal partnerships; marketing & outreach; business education; communications; and future planning activities. Warner said this was an opportunity to discuss anything items not previously covered. Ross mentioned a physical office in Ellsworth would be helpful for better accessibility, visibility & communication. Kahlow mentioned that the University has been discussing new spaces and collaboration for economic development.

Future agenda items. Bergseng request that the Lord Abstract Building be put on the agenda. Kahlow added he would like to learn more about the PCHA new building's previous owners and construction.

Next meeting. November 7, 2012 at 4:30 p.m. prior to Land Management committee.

Meeting adjourned at 1:21 p.m. (Kahlow, Bergseng)

Bill's

PIERCE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA -- REVISED 4:55 p.m. Friday Sep. 7
[add item 9 below]

Tuesday, September 11, 2012 12:00 noon

*** NOTE NEW DATE and TIME ***

County Board Room, Pierce County Courthouse
414 West Main Street Ellsworth, Wisconsin

#	Action	Presenter
1	Call to order & Introductions	Chair
2	Review/amend/approve agenda	Members
3	Review / take action on draft August 15, 2012 minutes	Members
4	Public comment	Public/members
5	Review / take action on 2013 budget recommendations for agencies under Committee jurisdiction: a. Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission b. Pierce County Historical Association c. Pierce County Economic Development Corporation d. Other	Flogstad/members Norquist/Members Warner/members Members
6	Review / discuss county Revolving Loan Fund status and WEDC regionalization initiative	Warner/members
7	Review / discuss County broadband service and improvement strategies	Warner/members
8	Discuss Committee and County expectations and priorities relative to economic development strategy; program & service delivery; industry & cluster opportunities; regional, state, & federal partnerships; marketing & outreach; business education; communications; and future planning activities	Warner/members
9	Review / take action on proposed sale of surplus Highway Department property, 15 acres +/- of Stogdill pit, SW 1/4 of Section 34, town of Trenton	Johnson
10	Future agenda items <i>metrics - broadband - local history - license</i>	Members
11	Next meeting date & time <i>Nov 7th</i>	Members
12	Adjourn	Members
Questions regarding this agenda may be made to Bill Warner, Pierce County EDC, at 715-425-3881.		
Upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities requiring special accommodations for attendance at the meeting. For additional information or to make a request, contact the Administrative Coordinator at 715-273-6851.		
A quorum of County Board supervisors may be present.		9/7/2012

MINUTES

Pierce County Industrial Development Committee -- Wednesday, August 15, 2012

County Board Room, Pierce County Courthouse, 414 West Main Street, Ellsworth, Wisconsin

Members present: Jim Ross, Mike Kahlow, Dean Bergseng. **Guest present:** Jim Bowman - WEDC; Greg Flogstad - MRRPC; John Norquist - PCHA; Larry Dokkestul - Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services; Rosanne Bump - River Falls Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau. **Staff present:** Bill Warner, Heather Hines.

Ross called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. Introductions given by everyone present.

Agenda approved as presented (*Kahlow, Bergseng*). Warner mentioned how it may be a good idea to discuss the County budget prior to other items on the list. *Motion by Kahlow to alter the agenda to discuss item 7 prior to item 5, second by Bergseng and agreed to.*

July 11, 2012 minutes approved as presented (*Kahlow, Bergseng*).

Public Comment: None.

2013 County budget guidelines for agencies under Committee jurisdiction: Warner distributed a table showing Committee budgets for prior years and noted that the MRRPC and PCHA have been placed under Committee jurisdiction for 2013. Ross gave an overview of Travel Pierce County's budget history with the County and background for the decision for no current funding.

a. Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission - Flogstad discussed the Commission's organization and services as an Economic Development District as designated by the Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce. MRRPC has written the safe routes to school grant for Spring Valley, administers the CDBG award for Bergquist Company, and was involved in prior CDBG projects that funded the County revolving loan fund. The funding formula for MRRPC is based on property valuation for counties within the district and this year's allocation has gone down again reflecting the Commission's recognition of county budget pressures. Bill Schroeder, Rich Purdy, and Jim Ross are the County's Commissioners.

b. Pierce County Historical Association - Norquist spoke about PCHA & described Association properties in Bay City and Ellsworth, spotlighting the Lawrence Studio project that will give the county a historical museum and the Association new office and storage space. The Association will incur more costs with this project, including utility and operating costs. PCHA offers a great service with genealogy research, public information and historical events that attract visitors. Norquist suggested the possibility of increasing the County's support of the Association by \$12,000 for 2013. Members suggested that Norquist provide a project description with budget justification for the next meeting. PCHA is a great asset to the Great River Road & their "Pioneer Day" attracts hundreds to Bay City in June. They have great ideas for making additional funding, but need a cornerstone to cover their basic expenses.

c. Pierce County Economic Development Corporation - Warner discussed county budget guidelines suggesting a total allowable County budget increase of no more than 0.70%. There was no specific budget to suggest at this time. Warner distributed a table showing relative support for county-level EDC's across the State assembled each year by the La Crosse Area Development Corporation. Warner noted there were many ways for the Committee and county to proceed relative to their investment in economic development, including

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|---|--|
| 1. Do nothing (no funding for anything) | 5. Fund PCEDC on a challenge grant basis |
| 2. Fund something, but not through PCEDC | 6. Fund PCEDC with some base plus contract/challenge |
| 3. Fund a County staff person, not PCEDC | 7. Fund PCEDC "as is" |
| 4. Fund PCEDC on a project / contract basis | 8. Fund PCEDC with increase |

Kahlow asked if Warner had information relative to county population and EDC budgets. Warner distributed a table with population figures and a chart showing the distribution and trendline of the surveyed county EDC's budgets vs. populations. Warner gave additional history on how the local cities used to fund PCEDC & why municipal contributions have been cut. Before St. Croix EDC, PCEDC received \$17K per year from River Falls. Now this has been split between PCEDC, the River Falls EDC, and the St. Croix EDC. Prescott also used to give \$5K, but that has been cut to \$2K. PCEDC also receives \$1500 from the Village of Ellsworth & Spring Valley. Discussion by Ross relative to the role of the Community, Natural Resource & Economic Development agent position now vacant in the UW-Extension office and that it was not likely to be re-filled in the near future.

Ross also said that it has been a difficult road over the last few years and the IDC has yet to provide Warner with a defined road map. What would an increase in the PCEDC budget do for the region? Ross mentioned BNSF rail system being eager to grow business. Discussion of Trenton town development potential and rail capacity. Kahlow asked what if Pierce brought the PCEDC budget up to the State average of \$150K, what would that buy for Pierce County? Warner said we can speculate but that returns are not certain for these activities. PCEDC could do many things, including finding natural fits for the region, bringing in specific industries and expand the tax base, e.g. take advantage of river access or the Red Wing airport. Warner mentioned that the communication with the airport has been disappointing.

Dokkestul commented that earlier the PCEDC Executive Committee gave Warner a performance review. The basics discussed included recognition of staff competence but heavy constraints in terms of lack of funding. The Board is satisfied with PCEDC performance across the county. The Board currently has a variety of backgrounds represented, including banking, law, manufacturing, other business owners, municipal officials, Workforce Resource, and UW-RF. Kahlow questioned what last year's jump from \$38,900 - \$44,000 was for. Warner noted that in 1996, \$44,000 was the PCEDC allocation from the County. Last year, Committee member Sitz said we should ask for \$44,000 which was approved by the Committee, then Finance & Personnel, and then the County Board. Bergseng stated that if PCEDC assists with broadband growth, the extra expenses could be broken out as part of a budget presented to County Board. This was another *action item* for Warner, to figure out costs of broadband research & surveying. Ross mentioned the fund for Travel Pierce County being cut. The group was not directed well & Pierce County cut \$22,100 out of the budget, Ross thinking that that money could go to PCEDC.

Introduction & discussion with new WEDC Regional Account Manager Jim Bowman. Bowman was introduced to the group as the Regional Account Manager for WEDC. Warner has been giving Bowman a tour of Pierce County, including a stop at Kasco, Bergquist, Steve's Scoring, Thomas & Betts, the old Phillips Plastics Tech Center building, and many other stops. Bowman's main job is helping business' expand, as well as helping business startups, and attracting new business to WI. Bowman's accomplice is Jenny Kuderer, who covers the same counties & has an office with Bowman in LaCrosse. Bowman has 25 years of experience in Economic Development, non-profits, and the IL Dept. of Commerce. Bowman would like to help directors like Warner to use public resources, connect to private investors, and create jobs. Discussion about greater flexibility within WEDC to customize assistance to specific business development needs Bowman also sits on the board of the International Economic Development Council and provides this national connection to local EDC's.

RLF status and WEDC regionalization initiative. On 8/29/2012 there will be a meeting to discuss the regionalization initiative. JoAnn Miller is the Pierce County representative. Flogstad and RPC staff are moving forward on the draft of loan policies, administrative procedures and governance structure. Warner suggested that getting into policy and governance specifics in advance of a consensus on whether to proceed at all was premature. Flogstad has to proceed under direction from the State and said he does have a consensus of the planning committee. Ross said that keeping the communication open is key. Bergseng asked if Sheila Harsdorf should be made aware; Warner replied that in January he was told by Vice President Hicks-Sorenson not to bring the discussion to legislators. Warner did share concerns with WEDC President Paul Jadin at a regional meeting in July.

County broadband service and improvement strategies. No results as of late, but the Public Service Commission of WI has put out a "Playbook for Broadband Progress." Warner said that the playbook is general and not particularly enlightening in terms of local action steps or resources. Warner said that the PSC requests comments by August 31, 2012. Warner said that he would look into the expenses of doing a survey so that the item can be added to the budget request. Bergseng questioned how far the cell tower signals will reach & if the terrain is anything like Pierce. Warner said that Rick Keane says the technology is improving and can also benefit our fire and ambulance personnel in better communication. **Action item for Warner to have a discussion regarding broadband with the Pierce County Towns Association and chair Barry Foy on 9/27/2012 at Union Town Hall.*

Future agenda items. Budget hearing & recommendations, prior to September 14, 2012.

Next meeting date. Warner will survey the group for the best date & time.

Meeting adjourned at 5:09 p.m. (Kahlow, Bergseng)

Submitted by: Heather Hines

Approved: _____

PIERCE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, August 15, 2012 3:30 p.m.

County Board Room , Pierce County Courthouse
414 West Main Street Ellsworth, Wisconsin

#	Action	Presenter
1	Call to order & Introductions	Chair
2	Review/amend/approve agenda	Members
3	Review / take action on draft July 11, 2012 minutes	Members
4	Public comment	Public/members
5	Introduction & discussion with new WEDC Regional Account Manager Jim Bowman	Bowman/members
6	Review / discuss county Revolving Loan Fund status and WEDC regionalization initiative	Warner/members
7	Review / discuss 2013 county budget guidelines for agencies under Committee jurisdiction:	
	a. Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission	Flogstad/members
	b. Pierce County Historical Association	Norquist/Members
	c. Pierce County Economic Development Corporation	Warner/members
8	Review / discuss County broadband service and improvement strategies	Warner/members
9	Discuss economic development current & future options; regional partnerships; state / federal programs & policies; industry segments; PCEDC plans & priorities	Warner/members
10	Future agenda items	Members
11	Next meeting date & time	Members
12	Adjourn	Members

Questions regarding this agenda may be made to Bill Warner, Pierce County EDC, at 715-425-3881.

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A quorum of County Board supervisors may be present.

8/9/2012

July 11, 2012 *Pierce County* Industrial Development Committee MINUTES

County Board Room, Pierce County Courthouse, 414 West Main Street, Ellsworth, Wisconsin

Members present: Jim Ross, Mike Kahlow, Dean Bergseng. **Staff present:** Bill Warner, Heather Hines. **Guests present:** John Danneker - Window Technicians; Larry Dokkestul - Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services; Dale Auckland - Harrington's Greenhouse; Joann Miller - Administrative Coordinator.

Ross called the meeting to order at 10:18 a.m. Introductions by all present. Agenda approved as presented (*Kahlow, Bergseng*). June 6, 2012 minutes approved as presented (*Bergseng, Kahlow*). Public Comment: none.

Revolving Loan Fund status and WEDC regionalization initiative. The RLF Committee met today, portfolio status chart distributed for review. The current cash balance reflects \$232,000 not including \$68,200 for Pop's Malt Shop which closed last week. Report by Miller regarding the WEDC regionalization meeting she attended. Miller was designated by Chair Holst to be the Pierce County Representative. She said that she felt that Pierce and Vernon County share concerns regarding regionalization. Warner distributed a WEDC information sheet regarding pros and cons of Regionalizing RLF's along with an article from the www.wispolitics.com website on 6/29/2012 about the WEDC Board considering changes to the regionalization initiative. Warner suggested to the RLF committee consider a request to join the Regional Business Fund, due to familiarity, proximity, existing relationships, and the River Falls boundary split issue.

2013 County budget guidelines. Warner noted Finance Director Brickner's memo relative to budgeting assumptions, with anticipated valuation increase of 0.7%, implying an increase in the general fund County budget of \$100,000, but any increase will be carefully scrutinized. Ross agreed there was little room for increases of any kind for future years also. Bergseng questioned what that would mean for wages, Ross suspects that they'll stay the same.

County broadband service and improvement strategies. Ross said to Danneker that he spoke to Pichotta and Land Management regarding fees with Pichotta noting that Pierce fee levels were at or below nearby counties. Warner discussed a meeting of Competitive Wisconsin at the UW-River Falls Hudson Center next week with the invitation signed by AT&T President vanderSanden. It may be an opportunity to discuss with AT&T the need for additional investment in broadband infrastructure. Warner had a draft list of a Pierce County Broadband improvement group & is looking for suggestions for individuals to add to this list. Bergseng mentioned the River Falls township's interest & the WI Towns Association. Warner mentioned Brad Mogen from River Falls Township expressing interest previously. He served on the regional Link Wisconsin planning team two years ago and was disappointed in the process and lack of results. Paul Bauer from the Creamery still serves on that team. Warner said after we have our team together, step two will be identify technology options and relative costs. There is significant legislative and regulatory uncertainty with progress unlikely until after the election. Miller replied that we should be ready with a plan when that can be adapted to whatever regulatory regime takes over.

Economic development current & future options, present & future PCEDC plans & priorities. Warner looked his 2007 Economic Development framework and how things could be done. Kahlow said that he would like to see jobs created that are well paying and that will stick around to provide opportunities for kids from Pierce County. Some businesses and entrepreneurs think that PCEDC is a grant source & look to us for a different source of revenue. Many clients have a business idea or technology but are weak on business plan and the basic profitability equation for the new venture. Discussion of program options and funding sources for economic development and promotion.

Warner suggested there was a chronic need for small amounts of equity capital but has received a weak response to our proposed micro-equity fund. Ross suggested also a more active marketing strategy would be beneficial. Discussion of newspaper and electronic channels that might be used and collaboration among businesses can reach larger markets. Bergseng asked about the new warehouse being built in Hudson [Uline], discussion of their consideration of Prescott and the importance of immediate Interstate highway access. Ross mentioned the Broadband issues needing to be addressed in the county. Ross wants to give Warner the tools to get the most appropriate businesses into Pierce County. Kahlow suggested that the EDC could get a group together to discuss potential/ideal programs and budgets, then come back to IDC & discuss cost figures and present the options as an investment. Ross told Warner to create his wish list and create a road map, even if it contains guess work.

Future agenda items. Lord Abstract Building.

Next board meeting date/time. Tentative for August 8, 2012, at 3:30 p.m. before Land Management.

Meeting adjourned at 11:42 a.m. (*Kahlow, Bergseng*)

Submitted by: Heather Hines

Approved: _____

PIERCE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MEETING AGENDA

NOTE TIME CHANGE

**Wednesday, July 11, 2012 10:15 a.m. OR
FOLLOWING the FAIR COMMITTEE and the REVOLVING
LOAN FUND COMMITTEE meetings, whichever is later**

**County Board Room , Pierce County Courthouse
414 West Main Street Ellsworth, Wisconsin**

#	Action	Presenter
1	Call to order & Introductions	Chair
2	Review/amend/approve agenda	Members
3	Review / take action on draft June 6, 2012 minutes	Members
4	Public comment	Public/members
5	Review / discuss county Revolving Loan Fund status and WEDC regionalization initiative	Warner/members
6	Review / discuss 2013 county budget guidelines	Warner/members
7	Review / discuss County broadband service and improvement strategies	Warner/members
8	Economic development current & future options presentation & discussion; discuss present & future PCEDC plans & priorities	Warner/members
9	Future agenda items	Members
10	Next meeting date & time	Members
11	Adjourn	Members

Questions regarding this agenda may be made to Bill Warner, Pierce County EDC, at 715-425-3881.

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A quorum of County Board supervisors may be present.

7/9/2012

Pierce County Industrial Development Committee MINUTES *Wednesday, June 6, 2012*

County Board Room, Pierce County Courthouse, 414 West Main Street, Ellsworth, Wisconsin

Members present: Jim Ross, Mike Kahlow & Dean Bergseng. **Staff present:** Bill Warner. **Guests present:** Cecil Bjork - County Board; Larry Dokkestul, Pierce-Pepin Cooperative Services; Paul Bauer, Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery; Rick Keane, Hager Telecom; John Danneker, Window Technicians; Pat Miller, Workforce Resource; JoAnn Miller, Administrative Coordinator.

Ross called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Introductions by those present.

Agenda approved as presented (*Kahlow, Bergseng*).

May 2, 2012 minutes approved as presented (*Kahlow, Bergseng*).

Public Comment: none.

Committee scope of work review. Warner outlined Pierce County Code sections relevant to Committee appointments and scope of work. Ross suggested that the Committee can do more than the basic outline of oversight responsibilities listed.

County broadband service improvement needs & strategies. Ross summarized a recent meeting of the Ellsworth Chamber Industrial Council discussing Pierce County's broadband access quality, speed and providers with possible responses. Warner provided additional details about the County's grant application for federal stimulus dollars that was not funded and noted that his participation in the state Public Service Commission's Regional Planning Teams for broadband improvement was disappointing. Future involvement of Lt. Mike Knoll from the Sheriff's Department, Brad Roy from the Planning Department, and the county Information Technology Department was suggested. Bauer outlined current and chronic issues in and around Ellsworth to profile the have/have not situations relative to high speed internet access, along with difficulties working with larger corporate providers in smaller markets such as ours. Bergseng asked if existing phone lines were adequate, Bauer replying no, more fiber optic cable capacity in the ground is necessary.

Danneker discussed limited profit potential in rural markets as perceived by the investor-owned utilities and his participation in the County's comprehensive land use planning committee, highlighting the \$300 fee for home-based businesses even though the business might have no truck traffic, no customer visits, and no signage. Ross noted that the IRS now requires electronic-based filing for some reports, adding to the urgency for better service for rural businesses. Bergseng asked about requirements to work with existing providers and their service territories, Danneker saying it depends on the location, noting that the Maiden Rock Town Hall is 50 feet from a CenturyLink fiber optic line yet the Town cannot tap into it.

Keane said there are examples of failed municipally-owned internet ventures and that the challenges and costs involved in serving low density rural areas are extremely high. However, he noted that good service can be achieved without 100% fiber to the home; Fiber to Node can enable 100MB+ speeds wirelessly within a certain range of the node. Internet service and communication electronics technologies are changing rapidly and existing telecom companies are trying to deal with new laws and, more critically, new rules still being written. Regulatory uncertainty is preventing additional investment. The county's independent telecommunications companies are discussing possibilities across the county. Once fiber is connected to broadcast towers these providers can do some things but it won't be universal, the County's valleys are tough to serve. Ross asked about territories, Keane replying that they were no longer absolute and other providers can apply to the PSC; broadband is less regulated than phone service. Bauer noted that parts of Ellsworth have phone, cable, and satellite capacity but that they all stop part way through town.

Warner suggested a survey to determine service gaps and market potential, Keane replying that consultants may come up with a study that says you can do it. Bergseng asked if investment will be obsolete 10 years from now, Keane suggesting that fiber optic cable will not but that the electronics that drive the communication will keep changing. Kahlow asked if the LinkWisconsin initiative had possibilities, Warner responding that performance to date has been disappointing and that the PCEDC has decided to invest in more localized attention to the issue. Ross suggested that the EDC would be a more appropriate driver for county projects rather than an ad hoc committee of the County Board. Discussion of not having the County play a direct role but to assist with staff attention, and possible contacts at Congressional and federal levels that Committee members may know of. Keane said they will help with Legislative contacts and technology information. Consensus to have Warner work up a draft strategy outline for how we can proceed for discussion at the next meeting.

County Revolving Loan Fund status. Warner noted a request of the County Board Chair to designate a person to participate in regionalization discussions for the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission region as selected by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation. Ross asked about joining the existing Regional Business Fund which serves St. Croix and Dunn counties among others, JoAnn Miller noting that we are just listening for now. Ross said that he is uncertain about which way to go with this and is willing to call WEDC if needed,

Economic development initiatives & priorities discussion. Warner noted that there has been little action of note with Momentum West or the Greater MSP Regional Economic Development Partnership. The Greater St. Croix partnership between EDC's from Pierce, Polk, Dunn and St. Croix continues with real estate broker visits and Twin Cities networking association work.

Ross noted that his goal was to help improve EDC operations, better facilitate drawing in more economic development, assisting existing firms, and improving the County climate so that additional county investment might be justified at some point. Dokkestul shared EDC discussions from earlier in the year relative to difficulties in maintaining adequate funding for activities. Bergseng asked about other sources, Warner noting that private sector responses to funding requests have been disappointing, and more public relations outreach is likely needed. Ross stated that we need a road map to get there. Danneker said that what he has seen of EDC client service has been positive; sometimes the length of time a process takes like broadband improvement can be frustrating. There are businesses that were incubated in Pierce County that have moved elsewhere and we need to look at why. The Certified Sites program at the State level was discussed as a way to move industrial sites further towards development readiness. Ross said there was value in attending EDC meetings and he would try to do so. Next PCEDC executive committee is June 14th.

Bergseng asked about whether our local economy was doing better, Warner noting that most manufacturers are doing extremely well and labor availability is a major issue, Pat Miller discussing recent work in promoting manufacturing careers and image. Bjork stated that the Industrial Development Committee and Economic Development Corporation relationship was unclear, Kahlow noting that Bjork is on the PCEDC board but not the Industrial Development Committee.

Future agenda items. Continue broadband project and economic development planning discussions.

Next board meeting date/time. July 11, 5:30 p.m. before Land Management unless otherwise noticed.

Meeting adjourned at 6:51 p.m. (*Kahlow, Bergseng*).

PIERCE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, June 6, 2012 5:30 p.m.

County Board Room, Pierce County Courthouse

414 West Main Street Ellsworth, Wisconsin

#	Action	Presenter
1	Call to order & Introductions	Chair
2	Review/amend/approve agenda	Members
3	Review / take action on draft May 2, 2012 minutes	Members
4	Public comment	Public/members
5	Review / discuss Committee scope of work per Code	Warner/members
6	Review / discuss County broadband service and improvement strategies	Members
7	Review / discuss county Revolving Loan Fund status	Warner/members
8	Review / discuss regional and state economic development initiatives	Warner/members
9	Review / discuss 2012 PCEDC plans & priorities	Warner/members
10	Future agenda items	Members
11	Next meeting date & time	Members
12	Adjourn	Members

Questions regarding this agenda may be made to Bill Warner, Pierce County EDC, at 715-425-3881.

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A quorum of County Board supervisors may be present.

5/31/2012

Pierce County **Industrial Development Committee** **MINUTES** *Wednesday, May 2, 2012*
County Board Room, Pierce County Courthouse, 414 West Main Street, Ellsworth, Wisconsin

Members present: Jim Ross, Dean Bergseng, & Michael Kahlow. **Staff present:** Bill Warner, Heather Hines.
Guests present: Cecil Bjork - County Board; JoAnn Miller, Administrative Coordinator.

Ross called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. Introductions by those present.

Elect temporary Chair. Bergseng nominated Ross, second by Kahlow and agreed to.

Elect Chair. Bergseng nominated Ross, second by Kahlow and agreed to.

Elect Vice-Chair. Bergseng nominated Kahlow, second by Ross and agreed to.

Agenda approved as presented (Kahlow, Bergseng).

December 7, 2011 minutes. Kahlow asked Ross if the minutes appeared to be a reasonable representation of what occurred at the 12/7/2011 meeting, Ross said yes. *Motion by Kahlow to approve the minutes as presented, second by Bergseng and agreed to.*

Public Comment: none.

Committee scope of work and 2012 budget/PCEDC plans & priorities. Warner handed out the historical Committee budget recommendations and noted that budgets of the Pierce County Historical Association and Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission are now under the Planning Department and Land Management Committee's review. The EDC acts as staff to the IDC. Currently there is \$44,000 in the EDC budget and PCEDC also gets additional funding from fee income for managing the Revolving Loan Fund. Ross encouraged committee members to consider ways to increase this support if focused on key areas and results.

Kahlow asked about discussions relative to eliminating funding for the EDC, Warner noting that was one of three options suggested by last year's Program Committee report [eliminate funding, increase funding, or dedicate funds to a regional effort]. Discussion about industrial recruitment, support for existing County businesses, and help for start-up enterprises. Warner mentioned the available Phillips Tech Center & ways the facility might be used in a multi-tenant situation for R&D or for the University. Ross asked Warner what kind of a marketing budget would be enough to conduct a campaign in Silicon Valley, for example. Warner said he wasn't sure, it depends on the goals and channels selected; but a major national campaign with direct and email campaigns, trade show displays, etc. could easily cost the entire PCEDC budget. Bjork noted that Pierce and St. Croix counties lack startup space and related Tom Elbert's conversion of the former Kolpak factory in River Falls into a multi-tenant business center, suggesting that for a modest investment the county could do the same in the Phillips facility. Ross asked Miller if that scenario would be possible, Miller replying the County would need to decide if that's the kind of business we should be in and if the resources and tools existed to pursue a project like that. Ross suggested that we begin the discussion of what the County could do before budget consideration in the fall.

Kahlow asked about whether the EDC has a strategic plan to identify key features & themes for the County (no), Warner noting that we are a one person shop providing direct business assistance and stating that the County does not have a clear concentration of firms in one industry cluster or segment. The County can now sponsor Industrial Revenue Bonds for qualified clients; the County Board previously passed a resolution to that effect. The County has also declared 25 acres of Highway Department property at the Stogdill pit as surplus and available for an industrial user. Warner attended a public information meeting at The Bluffs regarding the new sand mine proposed for Diamond Bluff and Oak Grove with an estimated 52 jobs involved, not including trucking positions. Ross said the duty of the committee/county is to give Bill the tools necessary to accomplish the goals of Pierce County. Bergseng mentioned the Working Lands Initiative before the Land Conservation committee this year. Ross suggested the Committee meet in a month to develop this discussion more thoroughly.

Revolving Loan Fund status. Warner discussed the blue page in the packet. The fund has 19 active loans with 1 million in outstanding loan principal. The fund has made loans in 6 municipalities and 17 towns. The RLF is an option for projects that are not quite privately bankable and that have job retention and creation impact. Warner sends notices of EDC & RLF meetings to IDC members.

Future agenda items. Suggestion by Ross that PCEDC board members be invited to attend the next meeting.

Next board meeting date/time. June 6, 2012, 5:30 p.m. before Land Management unless otherwise noticed.

Meeting adjourned at 6:51 p.m. (Kahlow, Bergseng).

Submitted by: Heather Hines

Approved: _____

**PIERCE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA**

Wednesday, May 2, 2012 6:00 p.m.

County Board Room, Pierce County Courthouse

414 West Main Street Ellsworth, Wisconsin

#	Action	Presenter
1	Call to order & Introductions	Chair
2	Elect temporary Chair	Members
3	Elect Chair	Members
4	Elect Vice-Chair	Members
5	Review/amend/approve agenda	Members
6	Review / take action on draft December 7, 2011 minutes	Members
7	Public comment	Public/members
8	Review / discuss Committee scope of work and 2012 budget [PCEDC]	Warner/members
9	Review / discuss 2012 PCEDC plans & priorities	Warner/members
10	Review / discuss county Revolving Loan Fund status	Warner/members
11	Future agenda items	Members
12	Discuss/take action on future meeting schedule & dates	Members
13	Adjourn	Members

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A quorum of County Board supervisors may be present.

4/26/2012